EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1.   An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or

additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR

1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the

payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Johnny

Ma on 12/3/09

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 44 lines 5-19 delete the following: "either by virtue of one of the reproduction units, as
master, prescribing its internal clock as reference and the other reproduction units, as slaves,
aligning its internal clock with that of the master via the network or carrying a copy of the master
clock and reproducing data streams or data packets on the basis of this aligned clock,

or by virtue of the internal clock of an external unit which is likewise available on the network
being used as the master and all reproduction units, as slaves, aligning their internal clock with
that of the master via the network and reproducing data streams or data packets on the basis of
this aligned clock,

wherein the data streams or data packets are used to send at least one command to the
reproduction units together with an associated execution time, the execution time being chosen
such that at least a longest network delay time established in the network between the master and
the reproduction unit can elapse between the transfer of the command to the network and the
execution time"

Replace with: "either by virtue of one of the reproduction units, as master, prescribing an internal
clock of the master as reference and the other reproduction units, as slaves, aligning internal
clocks of slaves with that of the master via the network or carrying a copy of the master clock
and reproducing data streams or data packets on the basis of this aligned clock,

or by virtue of the internal clock of an external unit which is likewise available on the network
being used as the master and all reproduction units, as slaves, aligning their internal clock with
that of the master via the network and reproducing data streams or data packets on the basis of
this aligned clock,

wherein the data streams or data packets are used to send at least one command to the
reproduction units together with an associated execution time, the execution time being set to a

time between the transfer of the command to the network and the execution time which is greater than a longest network delay time between the master and the slaves.

In claim 46 lines 5-22 delete the following: "either by virtue of one of the reproduction units, as master, prescribing its internal clock as a reference and the other reproduction units, as slaves, aligning its internal clock with that of the master via the network or carrying a copy of the master clock and reproducing data streams or data packets on the basis of this aligned clock,

or by virtue of the internal clock of an external unit, which is likewise available on the network being used as the master and all reproduction units, as slaves, aligning their internal clock with that of the master via the network and reproducing data stream or data packets on the basis of this aligned clock,

wherein a reproduction unit that has been switched in transfer the data streams or data packets received from the network directly to a codec, and the codec rejects the supplied data by muting until the codec detects a first valid frame, the codec is then stopped and the current byte is noted, and the codec in the reproduction unit then processes the data stream or the data packets again and is switched to reproduction when this current byte is played on the master"

Replace with: "either by virtue of one of the reproduction units, as master, prescribing an internal clock of the master as a reference and the other reproduction units, as slaves, aligning internal clock of the slaves with that of the master via network or carrying a copy of the master clock and reproducing data streams or data packets on the basis of this aligned clock,

or by virtue of the internal clock of an external unit, which is likewise available on the network being used as the master and all reproduction units, as slaves, aligning their internal clock with that of the master via the network and reproducing data stream or data packets on the basis of this aligned clock, wherein

a reproduction unit that has been switched in transfers the data streams or data packets received from the network directly to a codec,

the codec rejects the supplied data by muting until the codec detects a first valid frame, the codec is stopped when the codec detects the first valid frame and the current byte is noted, and

the codec is the reproduction unit processes the data stream or the data packets again and is switched to reproduction when this current byte is played on the master, after the codec is stopped and the current byte is noted.

In claim 49 lines 1-3 delete: "A computer readable medium containing program instructions for execution on a computer which when executed by a processor causes the computer to perform the method comprising:"

Replace with "A non-transitory computer readable medium containing program instructions for execution on a computer which when executed by a processor causes the computer to perform the method comprising:"

In claim 50 lines 1 -19 delete: "A reproduction unit configured to carry out a method for reproducing data streams or data packets via an output unit transmitted via at least one network , in which data packets are transmitted asynchronously, using at least two reproduction units which are at least indirectly linked to the network via a network interface, comprising:

the network interface configured to indirectly link the reproduction unit to at least one additional reproduction unit over the network;

A central computer unit configured to automatically integrate the reproduction unit into the network, and including a memory storing a permanently programmed data processing program that is activated automatically after a power supply is turned on, the central computer unit being configured to synchronize reproduction of the data stream or data packets with the at least one additional reproduction unit, the reproduction time difference between the reproduction unit and the at least one additional reproduction unit being 100ms, either

by virtue of one of the reproduction units, as a master prescribing its internal clock as a reference and at least one other reproduction unit as a slave, aligning its internal clock with that of the master via the network or carrying a copy of the master clock, and reproducing the data streams or data packets based on this aligned clock "

Replace with: "A reproduction unit configured to reproduce data streams or data packets via an output unit transmitted via at least one network , in which data packets are transmitted asynchronously, using at least two reproduction units which are at least indirectly linked to the network via a network interface, comprising:

The network interface configured to indirectly link the reproduction unit to at least one additional reproduction unit over the network;

A central computer unit configured to automatically integrate the reproduction unit into the network, and including a memory storing a permanently programmed data processing program that is activated automatically after a power supply is turned on, the central computer unit being configured to synchronize reproduction of the data stream or data packets with the at least one additional reproduction unit, the reproduction time difference between the reproduction unit and the at least one additional reproduction unit being 100ms, either

by virtue of one of the reproduction units, as a master, prescribing an internal clock of the master as a reference and at least one other reproduction unit as a slave, aligning an internal clock of the slave with that of the master via the network or carrying a copy of the master clock, and reproducing the data streams or data packets based on this aligned clock"

Allowable Subject Matter

2.   Claims 26-50 are allowed. The following is an Examiner's statement of reasons for

allowance:

Claims 26-50 are considered allowable since no prior art reference or combination of prior art

references alone or in combination disclose or suggest the combination of limitations specified in

the independent claims including:

"wherein the internal clock in the slave is aligned by virtue of the internal clock in the master
being requested by the slave, a plurality of times, and by virtue of at least one data packet, that
may be identical to the packets for requesting the time on the master, being transmitted form the
slave to the master and being sent back, and the internal clock in the slave being brought into line
with the clock in the master on the basis of a mean propagation time, calculated as a mean taking
into account handling times in the units, for data packets between the master and the slave" in
combination with other claim limitations as specified in claims 26 & 49.

"wherein the data streams or data packets are used to send at least one command to the
reproduction units together with an associated execution time, the execution time being set to a
time between the transfer of the command to the network and the execution time is greater than a
longest network delay time between the master and the slaves" in combination with other claim
limitations as specified in claim 44.

"a reproduction unit that has been switched in transfer the data streams or data packets received
from the network directly to a codec, the codec rejects the supplied data by muting until the
codec detects a first valid frame, the codec is stopped when the codec detects the first valid fame
and the current byte is noted, and the codec is the reproduction unit processes the data stream or
the data packets again and is switched to reproduction when this current byte is played on the
master, after the codec is stopped and the current byte is noted" in combination with other claim
limitations as specified in claim 46.

"the internal clock in the slave is aligned by virtue of the internal clock in the master being
requested by the slave, a plurality of times, and by virtue of at least one data packet, that may be
identical to the packets for requesting the time on the master, being transmitted from the slave to
the master and being sent back, and the internal clock in the slave being brought into line with
the clock in the master on the basis of a mean propagation time, calculated as a mean taking into
account handling times in the units for data packets between the master and the slave" in
combination with other claim limitations as specified in claim 50.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ROBERT W. WILSON whose telephone number is (571)272-3075. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00-4:30).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dang Ton can be reached on 571/272-3171. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Robert W Wilson/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2475

12/3/09